

## TRIBUTE TO DICK SEARS

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, it is my honor to recognize a true friend of Vermont, State Senator Dick Sears of Bennington, who has been named by FiscalNote as the sixth most productive State senator in the United States.

Senator Sears, who was first elected in 1992, and as cited by FiscalNote, has sponsored 314 bills and has a 60 percent bill passage success rate. This recognition of Senator Sears' effectiveness comes as no surprise in Vermont, where he is respected and is a fixture on the nightly news during the legislative session.

In the Vermont Senate Judiciary Committee, where Senator Sears serves as chair, he has acted courageously on issues including civil rights, marriage equality, human trafficking, and adoption. He himself highlights his work on corrections and criminal justice reform, as well as his successful involvement in the 2010 rewrite of sex offender laws, as major accomplishments; yet he also attributes his success in these important issue areas to teamwork.

In addition to chairing the judiciary committee, Senator Sears also serves on the appropriations committee, the joint fiscal committee, is vice chair of the joint legislative child protection oversight committee, is vice chair of the joint legislative justice committee, and is a member of the legislative committee on judicial rules and the legislative council committee.

Clearly, Senator Sears is a legislator who deserves recognition, yet doesn't seek recognition. In honor of Senator Sears' outstanding accomplishments, I ask that the article by Christie Wisniewski from the July 31 edition of the Bennington Banner, "Sears ranked 6th in productivity for U.S. state senators," be printed into the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

BENNINGTON BANNER, JULY 31, 2018

SEARS RANKED 6TH IN PRODUCTIVITY FOR U.S. STATE SENATORS

This story by Christie Wisniewski was published by the Bennington Banner on July 31. BENNINGTON.—State Sen. Dick Sears of Bennington is the sixth most productive state senator in the United States, according to an analysis released Monday by a Washington, D.C.-based software startup. Each year, FiscalNote creates a list of the top 10 state senators using "unique data analytics software," the company said in a press release. The list ranks all senators and representatives in accordance with their legislative productivity, which is defined as how successful the legislator is at sponsoring and steering bills through each stage of the legislative process.

This research also ranks the quality, endurance and substantiveness of the bills each legislator sponsored and introduced. For example, legislators score higher if they sponsor a higher number of bills and if their bills make it further in the legislative process. A bill that is enacted is weighted more than a bill that does not make it past the Senate floor. Finally, legislators score higher if their bills are substantive a bill that at-

tempts meaningful change rather than a memorial or commendation.

Sears, a Democrat, was first elected in 1992. Since then, he has sponsored 314 bills and has a 60-percent bill passage success rate.

"I'm just flabbergasted," Sears said of the report. "[I'm] really humbled and pleased, quite frankly."

Sears was the only state senator from New England to make the top 10.

State Sen. Brian Campion, who is running for re-election alongside his district mate Sears as a team, lauded Sears for his dedication to the county.

"Bennington County was once the forgotten kingdom of Vermont, but Dick has helped us rid ourselves of that title," Campion said. "He's incredibly hard working, and I'm lucky to have him as a mentor and district mate."

According to the National Conference of State Legislatures website, there are 7,383 legislators across the United States.

"To be ranked in the top 10 of state senators is an amazing thing," Sears said. "... I've worked well with various administrations over the years and sponsored some really tough bills."

Sears has worked successfully with four different Vermont governors and sponsored bills dealing with civil rights, marriage equality, human trafficking, adoption, and other issues. He views his work with reforming state corrections and criminal justice laws—especially with juvenile justice—as a "major accomplishment" and also sees his involvement with the 2010 "complete rewrite" of sex offender laws as a success.

However, Sears doesn't want to take all the credit for the bills that have passed under his watch.

"Like anything else, you never do it alone," he said.

Rep. Timothy R. Corcoran II of Bennington also believes Sears' recognition is well-deserved.

"Dick has always lived by his convictions and never backed down when he faced opposition to issues that weren't universally accepted," Corcoran said. "Bennington County has been extremely lucky to have him represent us up in Montpelier."

Corcoran commended Sears' willingness to fight for Bennington County, "whether it's been PFOA, helping to secure Amtrak bus service funding, fighting for the Vermont Veterans Home, or just securing funds for Bennington County in general."

"Dick has always stepped up to the plate and delivered," Corcoran added. "Congratulations Dick; job well done."

## TRIBUTE TO ENID WONNACOTT

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, on behalf of all Vermonters, I would like to honor Enid Wonnacott of Huntington, VT, who this month will be inducted into the Vermont Agricultural Hall of Fame in recognition of her more than 30 years of agricultural leadership in Vermont and the Nation. Enid became the executive director of the Northeast Organic Farming Association of Vermont, NOFA-VT, in 1987, the same year that I became chairman of the U.S. Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry. Enid has been a national leader in advancing the importance of organic agriculture. She provided important technical and advocacy support as I worked on the National Organic Standards Act as part of the 1990 farm bill—which has in turn

resulted in making organic agriculture a \$60 billion annual industry—with Vermont as a leader. Thirty years later, Enid continues to provide advice on organic agriculture and nutrition issues.

Enid Wonnacott's many accomplishments are presented in detail in her much deserved nomination to the Vermont Agricultural Hall of Fame.

I ask unanimous consent to have the nomination printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

VERMONT AGRICULTURAL HALL OF FAME 2018

INDUCTEE ENID WONNACOTT

Enid has served as the Executive Director of The Northeast Organic Farming Association of Vermont (NOFA-VT) since 1987. Over the course of her tenure, thanks to her leadership, Vermont's organic industry has grown immensely, from just 57 certified farms in 1990, to more than 700, today. Enid has worked tirelessly to help ensure all Vermonters have access to local, organic foods, and began a pioneering farm share program more than 20 years ago to provide subsidized farm shares for low-income Vermonters. As the National Organic Program was developed, Enid worked to implement a national certification program that kept the needs of Vermont's family farms at the forefront. Over the past three decades, she has nurtured and guided more than 70 staff and 20 interns, secured consistent grant and donor funding, and led NOFA-VT to become a national leader in organic advocacy, food access, and farm to school education. She has made an indelible mark on both the local, and national, organic movement. Enid grew up in Weybridge, and has lived on a small farmstead in Huntington with her husband, Harry, and children, Lila and Eli, for the past thirty years.

## NOMINATION OF LYNN JOHNSON

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, these are incredibly harmful and traumatic times for immigrants and refugees in America. Perhaps there is not greater example of the damaging immigration policies of this administration than the so called zero-tolerance policy that led to the cruel and needless separation of thousands of children from their parents.

Separating a child from his or her parents has lasting, harmful, and traumatizing impacts. These separations have been shown to increase anxiety and depression among children that have already experienced significant trauma in their home countries and along their journey to the United States. Best practices in child welfare promote keeping children and their parents safely together, unless removal is in the child's best interest.

While the Department of Justice ended the family separation policy after an incredible outcry from the public and experts in children's health and well-being, the damage is far from over. The administration is now undergoing a court-supervised process to reunify separated children and families. Significant and self-inflicted obstacles remain in this reunification process, and I and my Senate colleagues will